Killing of army jawans by Assam Police

2344. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two army jawans were killed on January 6-7/2005 by personnel of Assam Police at Khongia village in Dibrugarh district of Assam;

(b) the details of the incident, that had led to such killing of army jawans; and

(c) the action taken, if any, against persons responsible for the incident as well as the killer policemen?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. 1 Major and 1 Sepoy were killed during an operation on 6th January, 2005, due to firing by the personnel of Assam Police, in Khongia village in Dibrugarh District. The firing by Assam Police appears to be due to a case of mistaken identity.

(c) A magisterial inquiry by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dibrugarh, and a Court of Inquiry by Army in this regard have been ordered.

Streamlining procedures for purchase of arms

2345. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present procedure is very difficult to stick to time schedule in the arms purchases;

(b) if so, whether government is going to bring new streamlined procedures for speedier purchases of hi-tech weapon system for the armed forces;

(c) if so, the details in this regard; and

(d) the time by when it would come into force?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) The Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) 2002 (Version June 2003) is followed for procurement of Defence equipment. The procedure lays down the steps that are required to be followed for the procurement of equipment and weapons. Procurement of Defence equipment by its very nature is a complex and intricate process. The Government constantly endeavour to expedite and accelerate the acquisition process. But in certain

cases involving complex equipment, the process takes additional time to conduct technical evaluation, staff evaluation and trials where required.

The procedure is constantly reviewed by the Government with a view to modifying and streamlining the procedure as also to address any practical difficulty which the services may face in the acquisition of required defence equipment.

Charges of rape and murder against army personnel

2346. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the charges of rape and murder against army personnels, if so, how many rape cases and how many murder cases have been registered against army personnels during last two years;

(b) whether such culprits have been punished; if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government are taking to put a stop to such practices?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) During the last two years 17 cases relating to the charge of rape and 10 cases relating to the charge of murder were reported against the army personnel.

(b) In 1 case of rape and in 5 cases of murder, where guilt has been established, the army personnel have been awarded punishment. In the remaining cases, the charges are either under investigation/trial or the charges have been proved to be false/frivolous.

(c) All the allegations against army personnel are inquired into promptly. Wherever a crime is established/proved, stern action is taken against the guilty personnel to curb such acts. Further, the punishment awarded is given requisite publicity which acts as a deterrent for others.

Reservation benefits to ex-servicemen

2347. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the name of "horizontal reservation" a majority of ex-servicemen are deprived of taking advantage of reservations; and

(b) if so, what steps will be taken to remedy this grossly unfair and discriminatory situation?